

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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May 8, 2008

The Honorable Robert A. Sturgell
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Acting Administrator Sturgell:

Organizations and functions under your direction are categorized as high risk programs by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has struggled since 1981 to modernize the nation's air traffic control system. This program was designated as being at high risk in 1995.

I am writing to express my concern that the FAA continues to struggle in managing the vital aspects of public transportation and safety. With FAA expecting to spend about \$9.4 billion through fiscal year 2011 to upgrade and replace air traffic control systems, prompt action is critical. It is well understood that institutional change is often complex and takes both time and resources to transform these often unwieldy programs. However, strategic planning and budgeting can yield staggering results with disciplined management and oversight. As Administrator, you are uniquely positioned to guide this process.

The FAA currently has three reports with multiple issues identified by the GAO that remain outstanding. What actions has FAA taken to address these issues and achieve removal from the GAO high risk list in January 2009? Your prompt response is greatly appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Sheldon Shoemaker of my staff at (202) 228-6476 if you would like to discuss these concerns or other matters.

Sincerely,



CLAIRE McCASKILL
United States Senator